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ABSTRACT

Noting that parents and caregivers are vital to the healthy development and growth of children, this pamphlet discusses ways parents and caregivers can help children learn more about themselves and their environment in order to prevent violence. The pamphlet reminds parents to make time to listen to their children and take time to talk with them. Parents are encouraged to: (1) nurture their children; (2) model ways to control anger; (3) develop good communication with their children; (4) respect their children and teach them to respect others; (5) take interest in their child's education and development; (6) keep their child drug-free; and (7) help them develop peaceful solutions to conflict. The pamphlet also suggests ways that parents can prevent their child from becoming a bully or the victim of a bully and discusses reasons why youth join gangs. Finally, the pamphlet delineates rules for spending quality time together. (KB)

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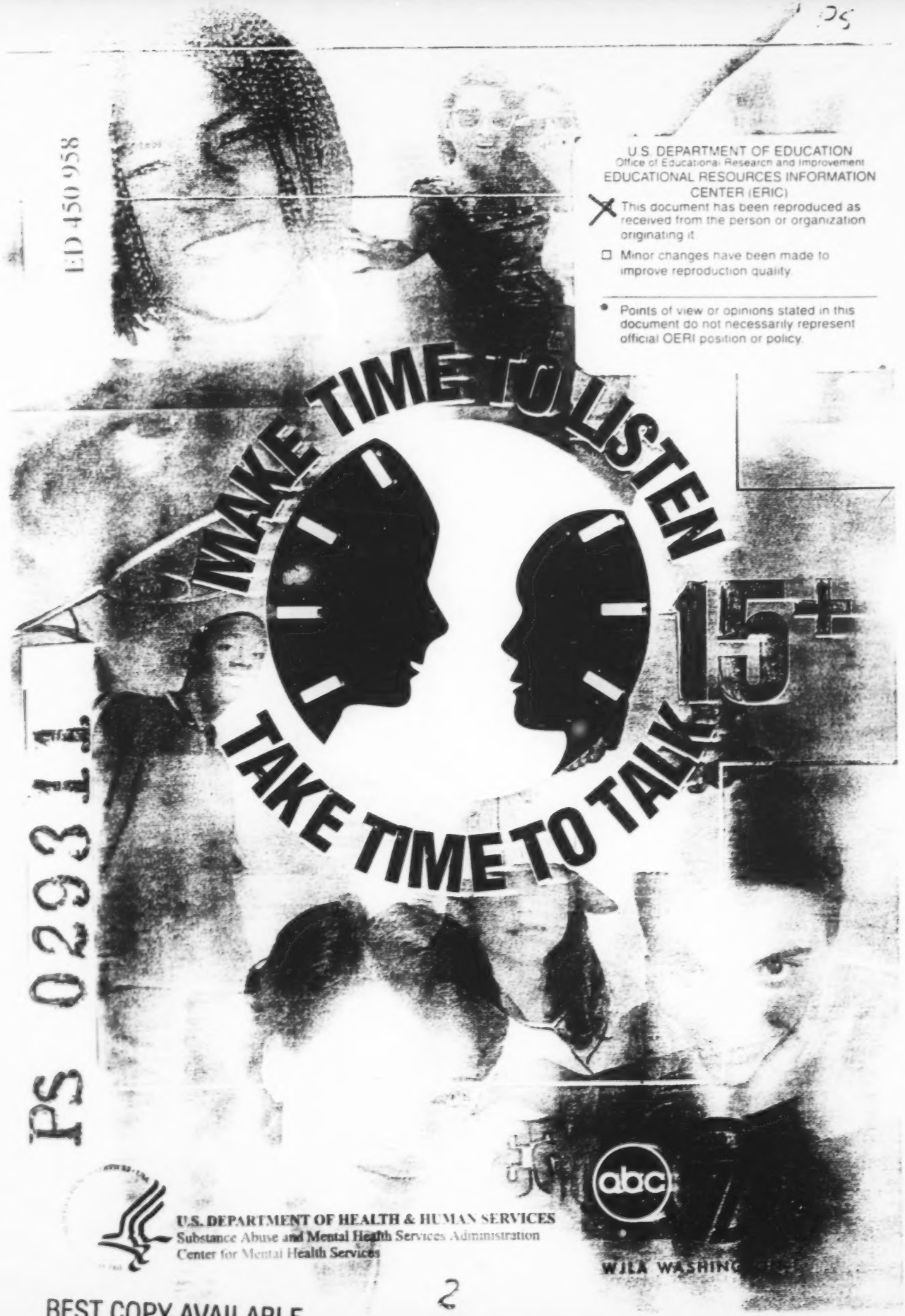

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PARENT

BE ROLE MODELS FOR Y

HERE IS WHAT WE CAN ALL DO TO HELP KEEP OUR CHILDREN "VIOLENCE-FR E"

Parents and caregivers are vital to the healthy development and growth of children. We all know this, but what can we do better to enrich our children? Helping children learn more about themselves and their environment can be a key step in preventing school and youth violence. Parents want children to be safe, and children want to feel and be safe. The following information will be both helpful to you as a parent and caregiver, as well as to your children. So take time to read and make time to share this with your children. Violence prevention begins with YOU. Remember to make time to listen, take time to talk...these can be precious moments.

NURTURE

...SHOW LOVE AND N

- Every day, tell your child you love him/her.
- Show affection daily with a hug, a kiss, and/or a touch.
- Make time for special family fun activities.
- Meet your child's friends to ensure he/she has positive influences.
- Reward your child for good behavior or a job well done.
- Set clear rules for behavior and monitor your child.

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-S
OUR CHILDREN

EMOTIONS UNDERSTAND-DON'T TAKE A STAND

Children who don't know how to control their anger are more likely to fight. Teach children how to calm down and talk over their problems. Tips for keeping cool and solving a problem:

- Keep in mind that anger is real, but it usually goes away.
- To calm down, think about or do things you enjoy.
- Once you have calmed down, think about the problem with a clear head.
- Take steps to solve the problem.

COMMUNICATION IS A TWO-WAY STREET

Children who have good communication with their parents are more likely to ask for their advice than turn to peers. When talking to your child, always remember to:

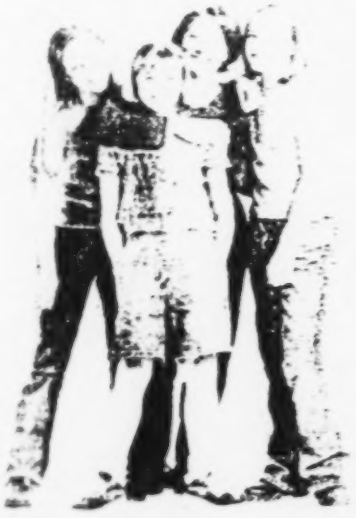
- Listen to your child.
- Find out what your child knows about violence and how to prevent it before you start talking.
- Let your child know he/she can always talk to you about anything.

RESPECT FIND OUT WHAT IT [illegible]

Many youth fight because they feel disregarded and, as a result, feel angry, humiliated, or embarrassed.

To stay violence-free, respect means:

- Give respect so you may get respect.
- Stand up for yourself without putting yourself in danger.
- Discuss ways to solve problems without fighting.
- Respect is not gained by physical force or intimidation, but by the quality of your character.
- Fighting doesn't solve a problem or get you respect.



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EDUCATION... EVERYONE BENEFITS

Take interest in your child's education and development:

- Read to your child and encourage your child to read.
- Meet with your child's teachers often and learn about your child's progress.
- Review homework and tests.
- Set short- and long-term educational goals together and help your children reach their goals.
- Encourage your child to participate in an after-school program.
- Give your child household responsibilities/chores.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE...KEEP YOUR CHILD DRUG-FREE

- Children who aren't interested in school, who have friends who use alcohol/drugs, and who are not bound by rules are more likely to use alcohol/drugs.
- Let your child know you disapprove of drug use, including alcohol, and WHY.
- Don't let your child associate with friend(s) who use drugs, including alcohol.

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GANGS ARE NOT FAMILY

Many youth join gangs looking for affection. Gangs only look out for their own interests and forget about yours. Gangs are violent. They intimidate, hurt, and kill people. Gangs lead to self-destruction.

GUNS...Are Not the Solution

- The presence of guns can turn conflicts into violent confrontations resulting in serious injury or death.
- Guns are more likely to kill a friend or family member (unintentionally or through suicide) than an enemy.
- Parents – don't own a gun; but if you do, store it unloaded and uncocked in a locked place.
- Children should be taught not to touch or play with firearms.

SEEING VIOLENCE...Through a Child's Eyes

Children who have seen violence are more likely to become involved in violence as victims or perpetrators. You can:

- Minimize your child's exposure to violence.
- Tell your child that media violence is not real – it is glamorized, misleading, and fails to depict the real pain and suffering of the victims.
- Talk to your child about the violence he/she witnessed.
- If you see changes in your child after they've witnessed a violent act, talk to a mental health professional.
- Some warning signs of emotional distress related to witnessing violence include sleeplessness, lack of appetite, lack of attention, anxiety, and frequent thoughts or flashbacks of the event.

PEACEFUL SOLUTIONS ...ANOTHER WAY

How to get your way without fighting:

- Talk clearly and calmly. State the problem and your desire to solve it without fighting.
- Humor—Make fun of the problem.
- Compromise—Both give up something and get something.
- Avoid/ignore—Sometimes it's not worth the bother.
- Remember, it takes more guts and self-respect to walk away from a fight than to fight.

BULLYING...NO WAY

Prevent your child from becoming a VICTIM:

- Instill self-confidence in your child.
- Help your child establish good social skills.
- Teach your child to speak out for him or herself.
- Teach your child to seek, if harassed, help from you and other caring adults.
- Try to meet with the bully to work things out. If the problem continues, call or meet with the parent of the bully.

Prevent your child from becoming a BULLY:

- Present yourself as a model of nonviolent behavior.
- Clearly state that violence is not acceptable.
- Assist your child in finding nonviolent strategies for anger management and conflict resolution.
- Seek help from mental health/school counselors to help stop bullying and aggressive behavior.

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RULES
FOR QUALITY TIME TOGETHER

TEENS

- Don't insult, shout, walk out or away...SHOW RESPECT.

PARENTS

- Don't boss, preach, judge, or criticize...SHOW RESPECT.

FOR BOTH

- Spend more than 15 minutes each day together listening and talking.
- Don't have outside interruptions.
- Don't blame or try to defend anyone.
- DO MAKE one-on-one time SPECIAL.

BE A ROLE MODEL

- Warm family relationships protect children FROM violence and many other risky behaviors.
- Be aware that everything you do, your children see and do.
- Talk to them and, most important, listen to them.
- Spend valuable time with them that includes fun activities.
- Find out who their friends are and if they are a positive influence.
- Find out where they hang out and make sure it's safe.
- Let them know you disapprove of fighting.
- Keep your children "drug and violence-free."

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